

BR
856
.L382
c.2

BR856 .L382 c.2

Leiper, Henry Smith,
1891-1975.

Church-state struggle in
Germany : a personal
view based on two months'
intimate contact with the
situation in Europe during

August and September 1934

THE CHURCH-STATE STRUGGLE IN GERMANY

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON

OCT 28 2011

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A personal view based on two months' intimate contact
with the situation in Europe during August and September

1934.

*See - Is it only
Something we should do
or deep guilt? If none
then all is created good!*

BY

HENRY SMITH LEIPER

*Ch. Struggle Concerning - Social & National
Struggle of German people
for unity & security - Ch.
is bulwark of their culture*

Foreword

Although the current newspaper reports, as this booklet goes to press, indicate a gratifying victory for the opposition in the German Church, the great struggle is by no means over. An adequate understanding of what is at stake can only be had by those who are willing to go behind the scenes and familiarize themselves with the main elements in a complicated and fateful drama.

So much interest attaches to the struggle in Germany between the State and the Church that I feel impelled to set down for those who may wish to read it a somewhat detailed record of my further studies of the complex situation during the recent summer months. In both official and personal relations I had an exceptional opportunity to observe it for weeks at a time on two visits which took me not only to Germany but also to most of the countries bordering on Germany, where church people of all denominations are naturally deeply concerned over what is happening to their neighbors. In a dozen conference and committee meetings of an interdenominational—and for the most part an international character—I had ample opportunity to see again how Christian leaders everywhere regard the German struggle against a complete prostitution of the Church of Christ to the purposes and ideals of a modern Caesar.

The Soul of Christianity Menaced

My first objective after leaving New York was Chichester, England, where I wanted to talk again with Bishop Bell, who has had the chief responsibility for executive leadership of the Universal Christian Council in the matter of German Church relations. As it happens, he is likewise the Secretary of the Lambeth Conference—a world organization of the Anglican Churches—and therefore in a position of great significance with his own communion. In the Convocation of Canterbury a few weeks prior to my visit he had said: "The crisis in the German Church is not a petty struggle on secondary matters . . . but about the substance of the Christian religion. It can be fought out only by the opposition within the Church itself, but if the cause of that opposition is lost its defeat will be a blow to the whole Church. Two forces are contending for the soul of Germany: the force of Christianity and the force of paganism. It is on the arena of this great conflict that the special struggle within the Evangelical Church itself is being fought." He gave it as his further conviction that "if the opposition were suppressed that suppression would carry with it the perversion of the Christian Faith in the German Evangelical Church and thus reduce that Church to something which other churches, however reluctantly, would have to cease to regard as fully Christian. Whatever might be true of the effect with regard to other countries, if Great Britain once believed that Germany had in fact repudiated the Christian religion the whole attitude of English people towards Germany would be one of grave doubt and even of alienation."

Because of his view of the importance of what the opposition in Germany is trying to accomplish for the Universal Church, the Bishop of Chichester had invited the leaders of that opposition, in particular Dr. Koch of Bad Oeynhausen and Dr. Asmussen, to attend the then forthcoming meeting of the Universal Christian Council in Fanoe, Denmark. We considered at length the probable course of the discussion at Fanoe and agreed that it would be well for me to visit Germany for several weeks prior to the meeting in order to confer with both the Official Church leaders and the leaders of the Opposition. What follows is an account of that mission and subsequent events.

The Sturdy Old Protector Dies

I arrived in Germany on the day when President von Hindenburg died. In spite of its having been long anticipated, his going brought a new element into the Church struggle which I had come to study. He had been in his way a strong supporter of the Church. More than once he had intervened on behalf of the Opposition who saw in him a bulwark against the designs of the "Deutsche Christen," or Nazi party in the Church.

My first consultations in Berlin were with such persons as the American Ambassador, the New York *Times* and London *Times* correspondents, the British Legation Chaplain, and a number of Germans who must unfortunately be nameless here for obvious reasons. I learned that with the passing of von Hindenburg swift action was indeed contemplated by the dictatorial Reich Church leadership. I shall say more as to that presently.

Lest it appear that I showed partiality by going to the Opposition rather than to the Reich Church group, I perhaps ought to add that while in Scotland attending the meeting of the Central Bureau of Inter-Church Aid I had many long talks with Bishop Heckel. It should be recalled that Dr. Heckel was previously associated with Dr. von Bodelschwingh, who was chosen by the churches in the first instance as Reich Bishop. Dr. Heckel was later called from his association with the Opposition by Reich Bishop Mueller, in one of several abortive attempts to heal the breach between the official Church and the Opposition. He was the leader of the German delegation at the Novi Sad meeting of the Universal Christian Council in 1933 and was made Ecumenical Bishop after his return to Germany from that historic meeting. Bishop Heckel, representing the Reich Church at the Central Bureau meeting, presented once more the apologetic of the Reich Bishop for the type of church government which has been set up. I remember in particular one afternoon when we were standing amid the ruins of Dryburgh Abby—one of many churches shattered during the religious upheavals in Scotland at the dissolution of the monasteries—Bishop Heckel said to me: "Englishmen who think we are having a pretty rough time of it in the German Church ought to remember what happened once in this land. If they had lived then they

X Important
would not have found it easy to know just what was right or how to carry on the struggle in a Christian manner!" There is truth in his observation, as I think any fair-minded person will admit. But one has the feeling that some things which were inevitable in the centuries long gone are not so inevitable now, or ought not to be!

But Germany must be judged by her program! **A Rebuke Turned Into Commendation**

But to go back to Berlin. On the Sunday after my arrival I walked to the Dom Kirche at the end of *Unter den Linden* with great throngs who were marching there to hear Reich Bishop Mueller pay his tribute to President von Hindenburg. Among other statements in his sermon was one to this effect: "The Old President on the last occasion when I talked with him said to me, 'You are preaching Christ to the nation!'" I learned on what I regard as reliable authority that the basis for this quotation really was an indignant statement from the old warrior to this effect: "Your business is to preach Christ to this nation and not to wreck the Church with politics!" And it is significant that when the funeral of the Field Marshall was held the Reich Bishop was *not* asked to preach, although one would certainly have expected him to have that distinction.

Baptists Used as Propaganda for Reich Bishop

At the great assembly of the Baptist World Alliance in Berlin, which I attended as a guest, the cause of the Reich Church was presented by Dr. Engelke. But he did not carry his audience with him and was assured by the chairman that since he had been accorded an opportunity to state views with which many of his hearers were in disagreement it would be expected that he and his associates would be willing to hear another side of the case! Very definitely on principle they are *not* willing to allow any other statement of the case within their own Church, although for political purposes it was a good gesture to permit the Baptists to talk freely—as these champions of Christian freedom certainly did in the days that followed. What *they* said did not get into print, however, if out of line with the prevailing policy of the Reich! All that was said *to them* by Reich Church representatives was widely published and the impression created that the Baptists heard it all approvingly.

Farcical Synod Rubber Stamp for Dictator

If there could be any doubt about the hollowness of the claims of the Reich Church to respect Christian conscience and abide by the great traditions of the Reformation it was thoroughly dispelled a few days later. On August 9th there met, on twenty-four hours notice, the Reich Synod—the governing body of the Evangelical Church set up in the summer of 1933 on the basis of a written Constitution adopted by the representatives of the Church throughout the whole Reich. The degree of "freedom" involved even in the setting up of this original

Our word was
Reich Synod is rather clearly indicated by the text of an election pamphlet issued at Breslau in July, 1933: "He who does not vote for the German Christian list is our enemy. He who is our enemy is the enemy of the State. The enemy of the State will be put on the black-list and will find himself in a concentration camp."

This Reich Synod of 1934 was unconstitutionally constituted. Many of its lawful members were not summoned, and in a two and a half hour session it was made to accept a dictated plan of action which had the following effects: it abolished the right of the Synod ever again to vote; it declared that the only lawmaker and interpreter of church law for all of the Official Church in Germany was hereafter to be the Reich Bishop; it abolished the church flag; it set up a preposterous oath which was in future to be administered to all church officials, pledging them as spiritual leaders to absolute obedience to Adolf Hitler and to the decrees *and interpretations of the decrees* of the Reich Bishop; and finally it made nominally constitutional all the past actions of the Reich Bishop! (He had previously averred that he was observing the constitution!)

Opposition Represented as Support by Controlled Press

When that meeting was called the Opposition had almost no choice whatever. Yet there were at least eleven men present who bravely opposed the program of the Reich Bishop. In all published accounts as dictated by the church authorities—with no permission for comment, and absolute quotation required—the description of what happened was this: "After a discussion in which the following took part (here the Opposition speakers were named) it was voted . . ." Obviously the reader would be led to suppose that the men named supported the action of the Synod, whereas the facts were exactly the opposite! Thus has the "new unity" of the Reich Church been accomplished! May God forgive the perpetrators of such deeds!

The Reality of the Opposition Shown at Barmen

The repercussions of this meeting were immediate and pronounced. I learned privately that on the following Sunday there would be held a great assembly of the Barmen Synod group to consider action. I took immediate steps to get into touch with the leaders of this group and started from Berlin for several days of private conferences with various ones whose names I fear it would be unwise to publish here. It was tragic to see their distress but inspiring to witness their brave resolution to go on with the uneven struggle against dictatorship, lies, propaganda, political pressure, and unparalleled hypocrisy. And it was a strange experience to find that one could not venture to talk with Opposition leaders in any room where there was a telephone, or where there might be some unseen listener. Bitter experience has shown what could happen if the utmost precautions were not taken. And it was significant, too, that the call for the meeting in

Barmen could not go out by post, telephone, or wire but had to be carried by men in automobiles or on motorcycles to the many centers where consciences were aroused by what had taken place in the "Synod" of Berlin.

Shall I ever forget that Sunday in Barmen! I had spent the previous night at Bethel, the great medical and spiritual clinic headed by Dr. von Bodelschwingh—the choice of the churches, when they still had their freedom, for Reich Bishop. I had had long hours with him in his private study, where he is now devoting himself exclusively to the responsibilities of caring for the six thousand people at Bethel, remaining for their sakes aloof from a controversy in which he would be regarded as being personally concerned as a defeated aspirant to the national leadership of the Church. In the early morning I had seen the beautiful ministries of mercy and relief to the mentally ill and physically crippled in the great hospitals and homes of Bielefeld; being reminded at every step of the way of Jesus as interpreted by sacrificial gentleness and love. In the afternoon I was to see eloquent evidences of the absence of any such qualities as gentleness or love in the technique of the Official Church government.

Perhaps I should add here a word or two to refresh your memory about the nature of the Barmen Synod. In June it met and was organized as a "church opposition" conference or "Confessional Synod" on the basis of six evangelical principles:

1. Jesus Christ, as He is revealed to us in the Holy Gospel, is the only word of God, which we hear, which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. The heresy is refuted that the Church can and must recognize in addition to this one word, other events and powers, figures, and truths as the revelation of God.

2. God, through Jesus Christ, claims our whole life. The heresy is refuted that there can be spheres of life in which we do not belong to Him, but to other masters.

3. The Christian Church is a community of brethren and belongs solely to Christ. The heresy is refuted that the Church can do with its mission and its organization as it likes and surrender it to the vagaries of temporarily prevailing philosophical and political convictions.

4. The offices of the Church are not there to give one man dominion over another, but for the exercise of the administration entrusted to and required of the whole community. The heresy is refuted that the Church can and should, apart from this ministration, give itself, or allow itself to be given, leaders endowed with ruling powers.

5. The Gospel tells us that the State has the divine task of looking after law and order in a world not yet delivered, a world in which the Church also stands. The Church recognizes in gratitude and reverence to God the benefits of this His commandment. The heresy is refuted that the State, over and above its special task,

should and can become the single and total regulator of human life and thus also fulfill the vocation of the Church. The heresy is also refuted that the Church, above and beyond its own special task, should assume State characteristics, State tasks, and State dignities and thereby itself become an organ of the State.

6. The mission of the Church, in which its freedom is rooted, consists in the preaching to all people, in Christ's stead and therefore in the service of His Word, the message of the mercy of God. The heresy is refuted that the Church can place the word and works of the Lord at the service of any arbitrarily chosen wishes, aims, and plans."

A "Secret" Meeting of Two Thousand Men

The unequivocal and indisputable Christian pronouncements of the Barmen group were running through my mind as I walked in the rain through the streets of the ancient city toward the *Gemarken-kirche*. The pavements were running with water. Through the storm marched long lines of men. They were quiet, determined-looking men with solemn eyes and a perplexed expression. Like their Master they set their faces steadfastly toward what they well knew might be a great sacrifice—of liberty, of comfort, possibly eventually of life itself. They were the pastors and lay delegates from the four or five hundred parishes of the Ruhr and the Rhineland who had come at the call of their chosen leaders for a hurried consultation in the very Church where their "Free Synod" had been organized a few weeks earlier.

Special cards were required for admission, and these had of course been given out with great care. Soon every seat was taken, the aisles were filled, men were standing in the choir, sitting on the steps of the high pulpit or on the steps to the four large galleries. There were eighteen hundred to two thousand there from more than four hundred churches. The music was profoundly impressive, as were the worshipful prayers and the scripture readings chosen with reference to the present situation. Luther's name and Luther's words were on the lips of all.

I have full notes on all the addresses, which dealt with the theme "Faith and Right in the Church." They were noteworthy, but I shall only refer briefly to their main contentions. The first, given by an expert in theology who was dismissed from his church because of his strong stand for the primacy of the religious over the political, stressed the fact that the task of the Church grows out of its faith and cannot be assigned to it by any other than its Lord. Its rights are to be derived from that fundamental conception of its task. It cannot wear the same clothes as the State or it is no longer a Church. But on the other hand it must not be regarded as a passive body with nothing to do because God has done or will do all. It has to bear fruit and will be judged by the fruit it bears. Our preaching must be alive. We must show that we have an adequate knowledge that our faith involves us

in a task for the doing of which we have certain rights which no human power can take away or must be allowed to challenge. We are in times when we understand as never before the teaching of the Bible about spiritual powers of demoniac character against which in God's strength we have to do battle.

The second address was by a lawyer, who remarked as he entered the pulpit after the singing of Psalm 68 (and what singing! It was amazing and moving to hear it!): "The fact that a judge should be speaking here is unusual and shows how remarkable are the times in which we live!" He showed that the rights of the Church have a foundation different from that on which other human rights rest. Without rules, laws, and definitely defined rights—as well as duties—it is impossible for a congregational life to exist among the people. Law for the State makes it possible only that people should live together as a national family. But law for the Church is designed to make it possible for the congregation to build upon Christ—the true foundation—in compliance with the Bible, the fundamental guide for the Christian's life. Through its divine function and its sacraments, the life of the church community is different from all others and has a higher quality. To talk about one People, one State, one Church as is now done is to misconceive the true facts concerning the Church. It is in the State but cannot be the same as the State. It has its own independent life and task.

But the opinion of the Reich Bishop, as he himself has openly stated, is: "The State has the new principle of unity based on totalitarian 'Weltanschauung' and therefore the Church must have the same." The motivation and the methods of the Reich Church have been fundamentally wrong. Violence and force have been used to create an outward show of unity. State methods and ideas have been brought over into the Church and strange processes instituted as a result. The leadership principle—at least in its present form—cannot work in the Church. The Lordship of one man means that the congregation is virtually turned out. Since the congregation has the right as well as the duty to assume responsibility for the life of the Church, if its voice cannot be heard it fails necessarily to perform its sacred function. There is left today not one single place in the system where the congregation is represented and can express itself.

At this point the speaker took up in detail the significance of the so-called National Synod which met in Berlin, and to which I have already referred. He declared: "This so-called National Synod and its doings present a painful sight to a jurist. We see monstrous wrong done to the Church not as something thrust upon it from without but as something officially done from within. We cannot recognize this National Synod or its new laws through which in the future we should have no recourse from the conscienceless actions of a Bishop made more powerful than the Pope at Rome! And on four grounds at least no German Church or Civil Court would support the actions of this

Remove from all

so-called Synod as legal. God is not only Lord of the Church, but he is Lord of all justice and right. He is a just judge and will do right. We should pray as Luther did in his hymn: 'Keep us true to Thy word, Lord.'"

I was then asked to speak for the churches of America and of the Ecumenical Movement. I was very glad indeed to do so: and I told them of our profound sympathy and of our desire to be helpful in their struggle to maintain the Church as a spiritual institution. I said that had it not been for them and their movement—up to the present time technically a part of the German Evangelical Church which Mueller heads—we would not have been able as an organization to maintain relations with that Church. (I have told the Reich Bishop the same thing, although I don't think he was as glad to hear it as were the Barmen leaders!)

After the addresses a tremendous protest was read against the great wrongs which the Reich Bishop has done to the Church. It virtually amounted to an excommunication of the Reich Bishop. It was solemnly read from the pulpit as the great congregation stood. The text follows in full:

*The Declaration Read at the Meeting of Sunday, August 12th, at the
Gemarkenkirche, Bremen, before 1800 members of the Bremen
Bekenntnisse Synod—Confessional Synod—representing
the Opposition to the present Church govern-
ment of Mueller.*

On August 9th a meeting constituted in a manner which is essentially unconstitutional made decisions, enacted laws, and declared right and constitutional wrongs which have been practiced hitherto by the Reich Church Government.

This so-called National Synod and its decisions and deliberations are all invalid according to principles of ecclesiastical and civil law.

Whosoever complies is (therefore) himself guilty of breaking the Constitution and violating the laws of the Church. We refuse so to do and call upon the Congregations and Churches that on their part they should not become culpable of compliance with these breaches of the Constitution and of right.

That things should come to such a pass is due to the continuous uneclesiastical conduct of the National Church Government, especially to the conduct of the Reich Bishop who was called to protect the Constitution of the German Evangelical Church.

The Reich Church government despises the simple fundamentals of law and justice. It submits the preaching of the Gospel to force and might of fallible men.

It is devoid of that brotherly love made obligatory by the Holy Scriptures. Thereby it forsakes the fundamentals of the Reformation Churches built upon the Gospel.

He who consciously breaks laws and constitutional principles which it

is his personal duty to defend has by his own acts foregone the right to expect obedience.

He who, though called to the leadership of the Churches, incessantly forsakes both Christian teaching and the Christian Gospel, puts himself outside of the Church.

Therefore we declare to the Churches, the people of the Congregations, and their fellow-members, as we stand responsible to God—

OBEDIENCE TO THIS CHURCH GOVERNMENT IS DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD !

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”
2 Timothy 2: 19

(Signed) THE FRATERNAL COUNCIL
(Der Bruderrat)

“The Fraternal Council,” which signed this declaration, is made up of twelve men from all over Germany who are the controlling individuals in the Confessional Synod.

(Note: On Saturday, October 20th, they decisively separated themselves from the State Church. They met in Berlin at St. Ann's Church, Dahlem, and Dr. Koechlin of Switzerland was there to represent the Universal Christian Council.)

When I returned to Berlin after the Barmen meetings I lunched with the Bishop for Ecumenical Relations, and I presented the following frank memorandum on the whole situation, in order that he might know the exact questions which the church leaders of other lands would be asking him in the Denmark meetings:

The Background

We should like to accept as reliable the statement of Herr Hitler that he is friendly to the Church, that he desires to see it grow stronger, and that a positive Christianity is to be embodied in the policy and statecraft of the Reich under his leadership. We wish likewise to recall the repeated statement from the church government that its desire was to promote peace and unity within the Church of Jesus Christ. We assume, however, that peace and unity are distinctly spiritual and cannot ever be promoted by force, either financial or political. Where church matters are concerned, they depend upon an inner motivation achieved through brotherly love, persuasion, reason, and right.

The Teaching of the Holy Scripture

We recall that the Holy Bible, the avowed supreme basis of the Reformation in the German Church—as throughout all the world—records the teaching of Jesus concerning the test of discipleship as

Exposition of the Gospel of John

follows: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples—if ye have love one to another." Likewise: "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their chief men exercise authority over them; but it shall not be so among you. He that would be greatest among you must be the servant of all."

Our Assumptions Regarding the German Church

As Christian brethren therefore we view the developments within the German Church as related to our mutual concern for the purity, unity, and peace of the household of faith. Our comments are based not upon hostility but upon sincere friendship; not upon political ideas or technical questions but upon these essential teachings of Him whom we all acknowledge as the one and only Founder and Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ Himself.

The Situation As We View It Today

We find more than a third of all the pastors in the German Evangelical Church definitely convinced that the methods used to achieve unity and peace in the Church have been not Christian but worldly, because political—based not on right, persuasion, love, and justice but upon superior force. As evidences that these charges are not merely rumors, I should like to record what appear to me typical instances of individual actions or groups of actions coming under this classification:

(1) The removal, or other similar disciplining, of from 800 to 900 pastors mainly on grounds that are political rather than ecclesiastical.

(2) The fact that not more than forty have been reinstated, although the definite impression has been given to foreign church brethren that most of those removed would be returned to office unless guilty of serious moral faults or disloyalty to the teachings of Christ.

(3) The use of police methods of force and threats of violence in carrying out dismissals of pastors and changes of church official administrations. Examples are to be found in such cities as Frankfort a. Oder, and in connection with the transfer of authority in the Hesse-Kassel church offices. As it appears, pastors have not only been interfered with by the police, seemingly at the request of the church government, but some of them have been even forbidden the right ever to return to their home cities.

(4) The denial through the early part of 1934 that unconstitutional methods were being employed by the church government—now followed by action of the Synod of August 9th under specific directions from the church government itself, designed to make all its actions and decrees legal and constitutional through retroactive legislation. This latter undertaking cannot but be regarded as an open admission that past actions have been both unconstitutional and illegal on the basis of existing church law.

Both has made Germany conscious of real people

(5) The employment of measures of manipulation in connection with the Synod of August 9th, through which the character of the delegates was controlled in favor of the official view of the church government. Twenty-one of the former legal members of the Synod were replaced without constitutional action, a like number not being called to the meeting; the president of the Synod was not responsible for the meeting; its members had only twenty-four hours notice of its proposed action; and finally, its actions were so reported to the members of the Church at large as to conceal the fact that there was strong conscientious opposition.

(6) The fact that the members of the opposition are made to feel that their every move is watched by the secret police, that their freedom of action and discussion is officially denied, that the *full truth concerning the situation is kept from the people* through a controlled church press, and that they are even in danger of physical violence at the hands of the police.

(7) The repeated evidence that the church government follows a motivation which is first nationalistic and political and secondly ecclesiastical. This seems to be revealed clearly in such statements as that openly made by the head of the Church that because the State is totalitarian in doctrine therefore the Church must be as well; that because the leadership principle is accepted by the nation it must be recognized by the Church; and that the time must and will come when only National Socialists will preach from the pulpits of the German Evangelical Church and only National Socialists will sit in the pews.

(8) The adoption of an oath for ministers and church officials which is demanding a political loyalty perfectly possible to a loyal German as a citizen but which has no place in his spiritual duties save as a secondary consideration. It appears to foreign churchmen, as it does to many Germans, a plain violation of the First Commandment and the teaching of Jesus: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

(9) The fact that it seems that the charge, "Thou art no friend of Caesar," is being used to intimidate Christians in Germany as it once was in Rome to intimidate or persecute those who on conscientious grounds are in opposition to things which they regard as un-Christian and therefore wrong.

Reactions to Internal and External Criticism

Bishop Heckel told me that high political personages had asked the Reich Bishop whether he would use political measures to punish those in Germany who have attacked him. This, he said, Bishop Mueller had refused to do. I wish I could believe this, but I cannot. Arrests were reported here and there as a result of the Declaration and its reading from pulpits. While I was in Berlin during that time the Associated Press man called me at my hotel to say that he had

received reports of arrests but could not get the names of the individuals. The *Times* man, with whom I had many long talks, told me that he knew of two specifically but believed that there were many more. Whether they had been made at the request of the church government or not was the point which I wanted to establish. But I could not get reliable proof either way. An ambassador, with whom I conferred, said that he believed there had been many arrests and that there would be a great many more.

Pastors Anxious to Avoid Schism

After the reading of the Declaration there were meetings in Berlin of the Opposition pastors. They agreed in saying that they would refuse to sign the oath which it was proposed to require of them. But they were not agreed, at that time, as to the total statement against the Reich Bishop. They did not want to leave the Church and form a new one if there was any way of preventing the split: and of course one can sympathize with them in that view. There have been too many splits in the Church in times past.

The greatest uncertainty seems to be connected with the question as to how far Hitler intends to go in forcing the Protestant and the Catholic Churches into one organization. There are those who see in the latest moves—the oath to Hitler, the abolition of the real voting power of the National Synod, the corresponding strengthening of the Reich Bishop, and the abolition of the church flag — direct steps toward the formation of the kind of nationalistic church which it is plain that Hitler desires. Others say that there is no truth in these statements. Having seen before in Germany how impossible it is to predict accurately, I am not attempting to make any guess as to what will happen. Anything can be attempted where you have dictatorship such as there is in Germany today.

There is no doubt at all that the protesting pastors are still for the greater part pathetically trustful of Hitler's motives toward the Church. They say, as Dr. Fiedler did at Barmen: "What Hitler has not done to the Church and will not do, that has Mueller done." Others, however, and a surprising number, have said to me things which indicated their growing doubt. Such people say, "Either Hitler will not or cannot prevent the destruction of the Church." I was surprised to have a high official tell me that in his judgment there is now a majority in Germany really against much that Hitler is doing. But everywhere one looked in the week preceding the election were banners urging people to vote "Yes" in support of Hitler as the one and only leader, combining the duties of Chancellor and President. Voices shouted it from loud-speakers. The papers were full of the news of the "campaign" (sic). It was a campaign all right; but not in our meaning of the term. How it sent my thoughts back to Runnymede where I had wandered at sunset a few weeks before! The German people are asked more and more to sign away every vestige of their political

What is Hitler's aim?

rights. They do it because of the vague uncertainty as to what would happen if they did not.

The church situation is obviously in flux. The deep struggle goes on mostly behind the scenes. No one seems to think that Mueller will last long. But that has been said again and again for months and he is still in his place. No one knows who would follow him if he were to go. Jaeger was regarded as the real menace in the church struggle while he was in office. But personally I think Hitler is the man who must bear the chief responsibility. He does not know what the inner meaning of the Christian faith has been or is. And to a great extent he has openly repudiated the spirit of what little he does understand.

Hitler Comments on the Church Struggle

On my last night in Germany before the Universal Christian Council meeting in Denmark I went to hear Hitler speak in Hamburg. Part of that address had to do with the church situation, and he poured scorn upon the theological scruples of people who were finding fault over differences of opinion which he insisted the man in the street could not even understand. With his strident voice ringing in my ears, and puzzled once again as many times before over the mystery of his peculiar influence in Germany, I took my departure for the little island in the North Sea toward which representatives of the non-Roman churches throughout the world were just then traveling from every point of the compass.

A Council That Will Be Historic

With the exception of the original Stockholm Conference in 1925, no international Christian meeting of modern times has received so much attention from the daily press—at least in Europe. And even the cables to the United States carried unusually full accounts of what went on there. Although technically it was only an ordinary meeting of the Council—which has one hundred members representing the Eastern Orthodox, British, Continental, American, and Oriental groups of non-Roman churches—in point of fact it was very much out of the ordinary. Formed to promote unity in Christendom through common action in the application of Christ's teaching to life and work, the Council had been led in recent years to a careful study of the relations of Church and State in the modern world. And then came the German revolution with its profound effect upon the churches. Quite obviously a discussion which was to have been concerned with the universal problem could not be merely generalized in the face of such a concrete situation.

The official delegation of the Reich Church had not only objected to the inclusion in the conference of representatives of the opposition but likewise insisted that no German sympathetic with the opposition should be present when matters pertaining to the German Church were

under discussion by the Council. The question might arise as to how there could be any opposition members present in view of the threat which I have recorded in an earlier paragraph that any who went to Fanoe could expect to be treated as the traitors were on June 30th. The situation becomes plain when it is pointed out that the World Alliance for International Friendship was holding its meeting simultaneously with the Universal Christian Council in the same hotel. The official church government in Germany is afraid to have any connection with the World Alliance because it is a peace organization, and therefore all World Alliance members in Germany are in the opposition. Naturally, therefore, the delegates from Germany to the Alliance meetings were not Reich Church supporters. In the ordinary course of the meeting they would have been invited along with others present to participate in the discussions. But in view of the bitter feeling of the official church representatives against their presence they "voluntarily withdrew" from the sessions to which with all members of the Alliance they had been invited. This incident in itself is rather revealing as to the brotherly manner in which things are now done in German Church circles. There was, however, another side to the matter and that was the very real danger that if Opposition churchmen were present when actions critical of the German Church were taken they might have been charged with complicity in what would be interpreted at Berlin as acts unfriendly to Germany. In the official German delegation, which was headed of course by Dr. Heckel, Bishop for Foreign Relations of the German Church, such prominent names appeared as that of Judge Simons, former president of the German Supreme Court; Dr. Krummacher of the Reich Bishop's staff, Dr. Wendtland of Heidelberg; and a theological professor from Königsberg named Koch (not to be confused with President Koch of the Confessional Synod).

The Letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury

The German Church question was brought up at the very beginning of the Council when the Chairman reported on his official correspondence with the Reich Bishop and read in connection therewith an important letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury in which the grave anxiety of the non-German Church world was plainly expressed. But the general sessions of the Council were devoted to broad consideration of the problem of "Church, State, and Community" and to planning of the work of the Council's research department in anticipation of the 1937 World Conference. It was in private sessions that the delicate question of the German Church was specifically dealt with. The Germans contended at first—as they were virtually compelled to do—that the question was purely a domestic issue and therefore no true concern of the Council.

All agreed that it was necessary for the Council to abstain from constituting itself a court. But the non-German delegates felt that it

was utterly impossible to meet for consideration of such a problem as that of Church and State without dealing in concrete ways with the overwhelmingly real issues presented by the revolution in German Church life.

The method of handling the matter was simple. Representatives of the foreign churches were asked to state their anxieties with regard to Church-State relations in Germany. Then the German delegation was asked to reply in any manner it saw fit. Questions were presented by Bishop Aulin of Sweden, President Marc Boegner of the French Church Federation, Dr. Adolf Keller of Geneva, Bishop Ammundsen of Denmark, Pastor Koechlin of Basle, Vice-President of the World Y.M.C.A., and the writer. They were both theological and practical and comprehended all aspects of the problem. They were direct questions. They were utterly frank. But they were asked in friendship. There was no atmosphere of tense hostility or bitterness. One could not have asked for a more convincing demonstration of the possibilities of international discussion on delicate themes in a truly Christian manner.

Not Self-Righteous Criticism

It was made very clear that the churches outside Germany do sympathize with efforts of the German Evangelical Church to bring the gospel to the people, and to interpret it to them in ways that they can understand. It was repeatedly stated that the churches are all conscious of imperfections and shortcomings and do not stand in self-righteous judgment over against the afflicted German nation whose sufferings are in part directly due to un-Christian policies and attitudes of so-called Christian nations. But it was also made plain that the perils which afflict the largest single Protestant Church in the world cannot be regarded simply as local perils. The rest of the Christian world stands confronted by the same dangers in one form or another. And those who are at present free from the pressure of revolution, free to think and speak as conscience rather than a political leader shall dictate, have a service to perform for their brethren in all branches of the Church within and without Germany. That the problem was approached from the purely religious and not from the political point of view was plain. This was very important because every effort had been made in Germany to create the impression that the discussions at Fanoe would in fact be dominated by political hostility to Germany.

German Replies by Bishop and Ex-Chief Justice

The answers were given by Bishop Heckel mainly, but likewise in part by the Former Chief Justice of Germany, Dr. Simons. They tried to point out what they felt to be the justification for many things which had appeared to the outside world as unworthy of any Church. Much of their statement was highly theological and technical: and

they insisted that only those who were German by birth, reared in German psychology with a knowledge of German history and the experience of the revolution, could understand and therefore consent to support the church government of Bishop Mueller. To my observation that the 7000 opposition pastors had all these qualifications for understanding and yet were saying even more unqualifiedly than foreign churchmen that the Reich Church was un-Christian, no reply was offered.

To say that the answers were not satisfactory or reassuring would be merely to state the simple truth. And even if they had been, the grim march of events in Germany compelled increasing rather than diminished concern. Even while the Council was raising the question of the threat to the universality of the Church in the Aryan paragraph the Reich Bishop was taking steps to insure the incidence of that decree upon non-Aryan clergy, for a time protected by special action on their behalf.

New Emissary Comes by Airplane

In their effort to meet the situation the German delegation, which knew itself to be under close observation by German spies and subject to great hostility at home if it conceded anything to the foreign critics of the new divine right of Nazidom, made what all fair-minded persons must have felt to be as good a case as could be made. Yet the Reich Bishop's office in Berlin, informed constantly of what went on even in the secret sessions of the Council, was strongly dissatisfied and sent a new representative by airplane to tell the Council what "positive Christianity" means in contemporary Germany. Herr Birnbaum, the man who dropped down from the skies on the broad beach at Fanoe, did not help matters. Indeed it is quite clear that if he had been the chief representative of his Church the statements of the Council about the situation would have been even stronger than they were. He manifested in his every utterance complete domination by the ideology of the Nazi state; and found it quite impossible to understand what was worrying the non-German Christian world.

Every effort to prevent the issuance of a statement on the case was finally set aside. Conviction as to the course of duty was too strong to be thwarted. Numerous suggestions as to a course of action were made. These were all carefully considered by a special committee appointed to watch developments and recommend action to the Council. Of immense service on this committee were Dr. J. H. Oldham, experienced and able Christian statesman, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, Bishop Ammundsen, one of the wisest Christians living, and Dr. Koechlin, as well as the indefatigable Chairman himself—the Bishop of Chichester. We met every evening during the sessions and worked far into the night on what Dr. Oldham frankly said was the most difficult and delicate problem to come before an international Christian body in this generation.

The Fanoe Resolution

The result was the proposal of a statement which was adopted finally by the Council in almost the exact form proposed. Although it has been widely published in part it is so important that I venture to give it here in full:

I. The Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, meeting at Fanoe, August 24-30, 1934, after common prayer and consideration of problems which at the present day confront the Church throughout the entire world, has resolved to invite the Christian Churches to undertake during the next few years in international cooperation and ecumenical fellowship a fresh examination of the problems of the relations between the Church, the State and the Community in the light of the fundamental conceptions of the Christian faith.

II. Grave anxiety was expressed by the representatives of the Churches in many different countries lest vital principles of Christian liberty should be endangered or compromised at the present time in the life of the German Evangelical Church. The Universal Christian Council believes that it is the special task of the ecumenical movement to express and deepen the sense of mutual responsibility in all parts of the Christian Church. And accordingly

Animated by feelings of cordial goodwill to the German people,
Profoundly grateful for the invaluable contribution of the German Evangelical Church to the life and theological thought of Christendom,

Dissociating itself from every political motive,
Recognizing the peculiar difficulties of a situation of revolution,
and

Acknowledging the sins and shortcomings of the Churches which its members severally represent,

The Council declares its conviction that autocratic Church rule, especially when imposed upon the conscience in solemn oath; the use of methods of force; and the suppression of free discussion are incompatible with the true nature of the Christian Church, and asks in the name of the Gospel for its fellow-Christians in the

German Evangelical Church

freedom to preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
and to live according to His teaching,

freedom of the printed word and of assembly in the service of the Christian Community,

freedom for the Church to instruct its youth in the principles of Christianity, and immunity from the compulsory imposition of a philosophy of life antagonistic to the Christian religion.

III. The Council approves and endorses the steps taken in its name by its President, the Bishop of Chichester.

IV. The Council desires to convey its sympathy to all its fellow Christians in Germany in the difficulties and perplexities of the present time, and to remain in friendly contact with all groups in the German Evangelical Church.

V. The Council desires to assure its brethren in the Confessional Synod of the German Evangelical Church of its prayers and heartfelt sympathy in their witness to the principles of the Gospel, and of its resolve to maintain close fellowship with them.

VI. The Council instructs the Administrative Committee to take whatever steps are judged most appropriate and desirable to communicate the concern expressed in this resolution to the authorities and members of the German Evangelical Church, and to follow up the principles which it sets out."

The German Delegation Protests

To this statement the German delegation could not and would not give its support. It had been freely predicted that the members of the delegation would withdraw from the Council if such a statement were proposed. But after speaking against the resolutions when presented, the delegation contented itself with issuing the following declaration:

"The German Delegation expresses its gratitude for the brotherly spirit shown to a large extent during the session of the Universal Christian Council this year at Fanoe. The delegation further expresses its thanks that a real effort has been made in the above resolution to speak with understanding and a full sense of responsibility and even in this time of conflict to consolidate the bonds between the German Church and the Oecumenical Movement. In spite of this, the German Delegation finds itself unable to give its vote to the above resolution. The Delegation repeats the opinion which it has frequently expressed that public resolutions cannot help the inner developments in the Church in Germany. It is our conviction that the Universal Christian Council must keep clearly before its eyes and consider with a special sense of responsibility the limits of its oecumenical task in relation to the inner affairs of one of its member Churches. It must do this for the sake of the future of the Oecumenical Movement itself. The German Delegation believes that the new epoch in the life of the German people and in the life of the German Church has thrown up a rich variety of positive problems for the Churches of the World. And it is also confident that the Church of the German Reformation, according to God's gracious will, will itself master its present difficulties. The German Delegation believes that it is not for us as Christians to ask for the help of men, but to appeal

in the spirit of deepest seriousness to the saving help and power of God. In particular the German Delegation protests, for the reasons which have been given in detail to the Council, against the following points:

1. It rejects the interpretation that there is in the German Church 'autocratic rule.' What is described as 'autocratic Church rule' is in fact the concentration of the Church administration and measures of ecclesiastical procedure.

2. The German Delegation repudiates the view that in the German Reich the free preaching of the Gospel, in written and spoken word, is in any way endangered or that due protection is not afforded to the Christian education of Youth. It attests, on the contrary, that the general situation in the Germany of today gives far more possibility for the preaching of the Gospel than ever before.

3. The German Delegation rejects the one-sided stress on a particular group in the German Church and the approval given by the Council to the special theological view of that group. The Delegation finds in this an attitude to the internal situation of the German Church which transgresses the limits of the task of the Universal Christian Council in a very questionable way."

Council Recognizes Confessional Synod

It will be seen from the resolutions of the Council that direct expression was given to the deep sympathy felt by all for the brave men and women in Germany who have openly opposed the prostitution of the Church by the State. But the Council did not stop merely with an expression of sympathy. It acted to secure for the Council the services of leaders of the Confessional Synod in prominent positions. Dr. Koch was elected to the Council itself as a coopted member. Dr. Asmussen was made a member of the Theological Commission. Other members of the Confessional Synod already identified with the Council were continued in office. No clearer indication could have been given of the desire that all felt to recognize and honor in every way these brethren who have not compromised their Christian discipleship or rationalized the urgent demands of a time of revolution.

The Reich Church protest, which appears above, contains the statement that the Council favored one particular school of theological thought. To make that statement was a very clever move. It had a certain apparent justification. But in simple truth there was no intent to put the mark of approval upon any system of theology. When it comes to theology the Council probably represents, in the main, churches which are more in sympathy with the pragmatism and "creationism" of the Reich Church than with the Barthian tendencies of the Confessional Synod. What was approved was the spirit and attitude of Christians who dare to put the Gospel of the love of Christ, the Syrian Jew and the friend of sinners, ahead of the Gospel of the

German Volk who repudiate the non-Aryan and exalt might, blood, and blind obedience to a very mortal man, whose hands are stained with the blood of his enemies.

Strong Resentment Manifested in Berlin

What has followed that Fanoë meeting? It was said in Germany that the most ruthless decrees of the National Synod would not be put into effect until after the Council at Fanoë. Scarcely had the delegates scattered before these decrees began to be enforced. With great indignation the Reich Bishop called together in Berlin on the Sunday following the Bishops who are in sympathy with him. They issued a strong statement repudiating the charge that their Church is under dictatorial control. That statement itself was probably dictated and its adoption required by the dictator!

Voting has ceased officially to be a privilege of German churchmen, unless it be a kind of "Hobson's choice" voting which continues to be the style in political Germany. The German Council of Bishops quite naturally tried to divert attention from the points which had received the main emphasis at Fanoë. They raised objections to the attitude of the Universal Christian Council, which did not touch the actual matters with which the Council was concerned. Moreover their actions and statements were in no sense calculated to relieve the anxiety of the non-German churches. In its first statement the Reich Church government rejected the criticism made by its brethren in other lands and stated that while fully recognizing the shortcomings of its own Church the criticisms from outside must be branded as entirely erroneous. Why, they asked, did not the Universal Christian Council hold its meeting in Germany in order to form for itself a free and undisturbed opinion? Was it not true that the Council with its sharp criticisms of the inner affairs of the German Church overstepped the limits of its competence? They felt particularly aggrieved that the Council felt obliged to ask for freedom in the Christian pulpits of Germany and for the right of Christian youth to be brought up according to the principles of the faith. Such reproaches they said could not be leveled at the country of Martin Luther or the State of Hitler wherein "practical Christianity" is guaranteed an unassailable position.

In order to strengthen its vigorous reply the Reich Bishop's statement enumerated the achievements of National Socialism in social, ethical, and cultural matters, emphasizing what he regarded to be the misunderstanding of inadequately or wrongly informed foreigners. The official statement closed with an appeal to the Council for reconsideration of its attitude and an emphatic statement that the Reich Church would continue on its way and remain free in its own decisions. At the same time, however, the German Bishops emphasized their readiness, in fellowship with the churches of other lands, to re-examine the question of relationship between Church and State and

People in the light of the fundamentals of the Christian faith. They declared their loyalty to the universal spiritual fellowship of the faithful. They declared it to be a most sacred duty of church leaders to live according to God's words and asserted that no officeholder in the German Evangelical Church is under any compulsion in the preaching of the word or the administration of the sacrament.

Naturally they made no allusion to the almost simultaneous assertion of Herr Hess that the preaching of the Gospel in Germany is free "provided the preacher makes the necessary adjustments between the Gospel and the philosophy of the Nazi party."

The news of what happened at Fanoë was coupled with this blast of denial and self-justification, in such a way as to make it appear that the real victors in that significant disputation were the Germans. I must say again that in my opinion the non-Germans did not look upon that meeting as an arena or a contest of opinion. They went to it with deeply burdened hearts and consciences. They faced its hours with genuine recognition of great issues at stake. They sought with all the earnestness they could summon to find a way to help the cause of Christ in Germany. It can at least be said that the actions of the Council and its statements regarding the German Church reflect the deliberate judgments of the Confessional Synod in Germany itself and naturally brought great encouragement to them. But no one can see that there has been much change in the policy of the Reich Bishop. He and his sinister Commisar Jaeger moved on from bad to worse in the weeks after the Council adjourned. Indeed they conducted affairs in such a manner that I am inclined to agree with a noted Englishman who knows Germany well and whose wife is a German. He said to me in London, "I suppose now the best thing to hope for is a long succession of blunders on Mueller's part. The worse the situation gets the better. That will result in stiffening the opposition as nothing else can do."

"Unification" Completed—Reich Bishop is Consecrated

The long delayed consecration of Mueller, which was first set to take place in the fall of 1933 and then cancelled because no foreign church representatives would have anything to do with it, was actually carried out on September 23, 1934. Prior to that event the process of forcing outward and nominal unity in the Church was speeded up by the wholesale use of violence, secret police, and coercion. The Reich Bishop stood up to receive his mandate but instead of standing at the pinnacle of a great and unified Church he is seen to be standing upon a rickety scaffold over the graves of broken promises and grievously wronged conscientious objectors to his political methods. Instead of unity he has brought about a split within the Church so deep and serious that its healing will be a matter of years, if not generations.

As this goes to press reports come from Germany of a special meeting of the Council's Administrative Committee called for Octo-

ber 26th in Chichester. In advance of that meeting Dr. Koechlin, a prominent Swiss Christian leader, went as the Council's representative to attend a meeting of the Confessional Synod in Berlin to give evidence of the continued foreign church support for this movement.

The Trends Since the Fano Meeting

The question as to how far the members of the Barmen Synod were justified in having faith that Hitler would not favor what Mueller has been doing in the Church has since been answered very definitely. The news of it came in such an unobtrusive manner that it may have escaped general attention. Bishop Meiser, knowing that German civil courts had almost invariably supported the claims of the opposition against unconstitutional actions of the Reich Bishop in the past year, wrote to Hitler to ask whether he regarded the methods followed by the Reich Church as constitutional. The "*Fuehrer*" did not answer in person but sent a reply through his secretary, Herr Meissner. The significance of this will be apparent when I point out that Meissner was the secretary of von Hindenburg and that when Herr Hitler unified the two offices of Chancellor and President he took over this very able secretary for certain functions previously assigned to the presidential office. Since President von Hindenburg was a great Protestant supporter, Meissner has in the past been the person through whom the Evangelical Churches have received comforting reassurance. Now it is from him that they receive word that Herr Hitler has had all questions concerning the methods employed to unify the Evangelical Church reviewed and that he finds them constitutional. And since Mueller is his puppet, and since he insists that the Church shall be brought into line with prevailing Nazi ideas, anything goes. What is a constitution between all-wise dictators, each supposed to be supreme in his own sphere?

This development, together with the official dismissal of Bishop Wurm and the driving out of office of his staff, came after I left Germany. But I regarded it as so certain that I wrote predicting that it would happen. We were told by those acquainted with the inner trend of things in the Church that the carrying out of the decrees passed at the National Synod on August 9th would be postponed until after the Fano meeting. And they were! But not for long, as subsequent events prove.

The strong impression of most observers in Berlin—at least most of those with whom I talked—is that the purpose of the Nazis is to bring the Roman and the Evangelical Churches together into one Reich Church. This has been repeatedly announced and denied—each announcement being doubtless in the nature of a trial balloon. The report is that Hitler anticipates opposition from about five million Catholics. But since the opposition in the Evangelical Church has been technically smashed and overridden by methods of force, he assumes that the same thing can be done with Rome. Only it will not

be attempted until after the Saar plebiscite! The assumption in Germany is, of course, that the Saar will be voted into the Reich; and every effort is being made to insure this "happy" outcome by fair means or foul. What apparently has not been taken fully into account is the effect upon the Roman Catholic world of this new act of violence against Christian conscience, this new treacherous breach of promise, this new and open confession to the world that resurrected Caesarism is the ultimate arbiter of the fate of all religious bodies in Germany.

Continuing Church Support Outside Germany for Oppressed Groups

The whole question of the attitude of churches outside of Germany must therefore be considered in the light of these developments. Every effort to strengthen and support the Opposition has proved discouraging. Steadily and relentlessly the Nazi Juggernaut has advanced, crushing every obstacle in its path with utter disregard for past promises, honor, justice, right, or truth. It is an appalling spectacle, and one which would be unbelievable if one had not seen it at close range and felt the terror and dismay of those who see themselves destined to be ground beneath it.

Certainly history cannot say that the churches in other lands have been indifferent, or inactive, or cowardly. They have not compromised; they have spoken with the utmost frankness and continued to try to hope when hope seemed increasingly forlorn. They have gone the second mile, longing to see some faint evidence that the assurances of the Reich Church, given in apparent good faith, would be fulfilled. But they are now utterly disillusioned—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that their constantly increased anxieties have been shown to be grounded not on fancy but on grim fact. They are near the point of agreeing with Dr. Karl Barth, who said more than a year ago that it was quite likely that only a remnant of the Church would be left in Germany to exist, for a time at least, virtually in the catacombs.

The question which each church now faces and which the Universal Christian Council still faces is that of future relations. They have given their moral and spiritual support to the Confessional Synod. If and when that becomes a separate church there is no question as to its standing with the other churches of the world. How much longer anyone can maintain even nominal relations with the Reich Church is an open question. The officials of the Universal Christian Council—Archbishop Germanos, new Chairman; Bishop Bell of Chichester, now Chairman of the Administrative Committee; Dr. Henriod, General Secretary; and Dr. Schoenfeld, Research Director, will act under the mandate given them to pursue further efforts to mediate in this momentous struggle so full of significance for the future of the Church.

What of the Future?

Having watched the Russian revolution from the inside, and having seen a good deal of the Chinese revolution when living in China, I have learned how sadly mistaken most prophets are when they undertake to tell what is going to happen. My own contact with Germany during the period when the virus of Naziism was being injected into the nation's veins taught me again the impossibility of accurate prediction. Most of the things that were predicted by observers in those days have since been proven wrong.

But with this qualification and disclaimer of any wisdom, I will make a few remarks about what I think may happen. Unquestionably Hitler is going to the Right. He is much more conservative with regard to labor than he was. He is thought by many to be rather definitely under the control of a few great industrial magnates, like Thyssen. Part of the explanation of the murders which he ordered in June was the existence among his early associates of real concern over this shift. Since he promised all things to all men it was quite inevitable that when he failed—and of course he did fail—to deliver the goods there should be grumbling and discontent. He is somewhat more restrained with regard to the features of his program having to do with expansion into surrounding territories.

Apparently the Protestant Church "unification" struggle has not taught him anything. If his political senses are as keen as they once were, he ought to know that there is actually less unity today in the Church than there was when his revolution was conceived. As already pointed out, only the outward shell of a unified church has been created. This in no sense guarantees that the inner life of the whole great body will be regimented as he desires. Indeed, what I found this summer among many of the people who have the most influence in the Opposition is that their confidence in Hitler is waning fast. While a year ago none of those with whom I spoke had anything but praise and admiration for Hitler, there were many less confident voices this year; and a good many did not hesitate to say things which indicated plainly enough their growing anxiety with regard to this supposed new Messiah. His halo is badly dented and his supposed omniscience is subject to embarrassing qualifications and limitations. Yet totalitarianism makes him still the supreme mind—the objective truth—for the nation.

If now Hitler proceeds, as seems likely, to antagonize further the Roman Church by a program of forced unification with Protestants, there will spring up within that great body, constituting some 40 per cent of the people of Germany, many more doubters. Couple these things with the fact that he has already antagonized the Jews of the whole world and you see what a body of opposition he is creating. With the economic situation what it is, there seem indeed to be some grounds for the confident prediction which I heard from many quar-

ters to the effect that a smash might easily come this winter or a year from now. One hesitates to think of what that might mean. A people so badly fooled and childishly enthused as are the majority of the Germans today may, when disillusioned and disappointed, be expected to do almost anything. Much as one may loathe the things for which Hitler stands—at least on the negative side of his program and in his implacable hatred of his supposed enemies—it is necessary to state that things might be worse without his strong hand on the helm. His close associates are worse than he is; for many of them seem not to be sincere and selfless in their devotion to Germany—and he is undoubtedly that.

Hitler made what seems to me a great mistake in policy when he took over the authority and the prerogatives of the late President's office. Up until the time when he did that there was someone on whom he could lay the blame if things went wrong. He could say: "I am not the only ruler of Germany, there is the President; and he keeps me from doing this, or made me do that, or interfered so as to spoil the effect of my policies." Now he must accept the full responsibility for every major policy of the government. He may think he can get away with it. I do not think he can indefinitely. It is not humanly possible. The Germans have very little knowledge of the psychology of other peoples. They seem to be content to put up with things which no other cultured and educated nation would stand. But there are certain psychological laws at work, even so, in Germany as elsewhere. The German shows already a vague sense of uneasiness at not having any check upon Hitler. A good many Germans actually said things to me at the time of the funeral of von Hindenburg and afterwards which betrayed this uneasiness. I think the feeling will spread rather quickly among the intellectuals and from them be caught by others.

War with some foreign power could check any such spreading doubt very promptly—at least at the outset. But Hitler knows perfectly well how weak his country would be, relatively, in any major contest. And I do not expect him to risk a major war for some years at least. The glib talk of war which fills his book has been toned down in later editions.

The agitation against Germany and economic boycotts throughout the world are at present providing the psychological equivalent for war. Hitler may say, "Wages are lower than they were in Germany when I assumed power; but that is due to the enemies of our country. Costs are higher; though I promised they would be lower. That, too, is the result of such forces as the Jewish boycott. We must stand together against a hostile world!" Indeed so true is this, that it may be true to say that outside economic pressure will actually strengthen rather than weaken his hold on the German people.

This reminds me of a fact which may not be widely known in this country. It has to do with that same book: "the Bible of Nazidom," *Mein Kampf*. I was told that strenuous efforts were being made

to locate all the copies of early editions left in the stores. They were being gathered in and newer editions, more discreet, were placed on the shelves in their stead. Just why this was being done—if it was being done—I do not know. I suppose that possible embarrassment may have arisen over such statements as the one in the original edition to the effect that you can hardly exaggerate the amount of lying that is necessary to lead the Germans where you want them to go. That does not look so well now—however it may have looked when it was written by the prisoner of the Beer Hall Putsch.

Some day the truth will once more free the German Soul and the German Church. United Christian forces must everywhere rally to the support of Germany's millions of loyal Christians. That such forces support of Germany's millions of loyal Christians. That such forces can have effect was clearly shown the last weeks in October and the first in November. It was anticipated that Hitler's policy would be to arrest all the leaders of the Confessional Synod and to receive Mueller's long deferred oath of allegiance. Messages from the various sections of the Universal Christian Council poured into Germany during those critical hours assuring the Confessional Groups of the most unqualified moral and spiritual support and calling upon the German officials to realize that continued violence against the Opposition would inevitably alienate the sympathies of those who desire to be Germany's friends. To the amazement of almost everyone the Chancellor changed his mind and refused to see Mueller on the pretext of a diplomatic toothache and announced that the State would withdraw from further interference in church affairs. This was on Tuesday, October 30th. On the following Sunday the Confessional Synod met in Berlin. A leading representative of the Universal Christian Council, Dr. Koechlin from Switzerland, was present to give unmistakable evidence of the support and sympathy of the churches in the world. Letters and cablegrams from Europe indicate that in the judgment of the Opposition there is no question but that the efforts which culminated in the visit of Dr. Koechlin must be credited with a large share in bringing about this encouraging result. Too much must not be made of it, however, as the victory is by no means won. The Christian world has to show that even the revived state worship of Nazi Germany is not strong enough to meet the spiritual force of a united Christendom.

SIDELIGHTS

Not the Sword of Gideon

Four of the best young theological students from Germany were selected by the Reich Bishop's office to attend the Ecumenical Seminar in Geneva, held this summer under the auspices of the Universal Christian Council and conducted by its able lecturer, Dr. Adolf Keller. One of the four students differed in class one day on a theological

matter from the other three Germans. The next day he did not come to the lectures. On the second day when he returned, looking very badly, a non-German friend (who gave me the facts) asked him what was the trouble. He said: "Because I differed from the others I was challenged to a duel by the leader of our delegation. It has taken me a day of writing and telegraphing to enlist friends to help me dissuade him from fighting a duel over a theological difference." Methods of force when employed on a large scale by the official Church have a way of inviting imitation even among the immature ministers of the future!

Moral (?) Suasion as Applied in Church Administration

If one asks for illustrations of the manner in which state means are used to force compliance with the will of the Reich Church, here is a typical case. A certain pastor of a German church outside of Germany was summoned to Berlin by the Reich Church. He was given a statement to sign. Upon reading it he saw that he could not conscientiously sign it. He refused. "Well, you give up your church in.....if you do not sign," said the Bishop. "Why should I give it up?" he asked. "My people called me there. They agree with my views. They would support me in refusing to sign such a statement." "How are you going to get back to your church if I forbid it?" parried the Bishop. "By the same route that I used in coming here to Berlin," responded the young pastor. "But suppose I have your passport cancelled?" threatened the Bishop. In this instance the threat was not carried out; and the young pastor, who told me the story himself, is still at his post. But there are others who have not been able to muster up as much aggressive courage as he has shown. When state means are called in, they feel themselves to be defeated.

Church and State Tie-Up Freely Admitted

The acceptance of the intimate tie between the Hitler party and the Church is well illustrated in what Herr Birnbaum, who was sent by airplane from Berlin to the Fanoe meeting, had to say to certain questions I asked him. "Is it not true that the only reason the present head of the Church occupies that position is because of his friendship with Hitler?" "How could anyone be Reich Bishop in Germany if he were not the '*Fuehrer's*' choice?" was the reply. Then I asked: "Were not all pastors told to read a statement from their pulpits on the Sunday of the 'election' telling people to vote for Hitler; and did not the church bulletins display slogans of the same character?" Herr Birnbaum replied: "Why shouldn't they?" When I reminded him of the claim that Herr Jaeger, speaking as a church official, had said that the Confessional Synod representatives might come to Fanoe if they wished, and then as a member of the Ministry of Cults he had said they should not attend, Herr Birnbaum did not deny it. He only

observed that there was a very close and friendly understanding between the Church and State! Since Herr Birnbaum boasts of having been the first minister called by Herr Jaeger to the church headquarters staff, it was not surprising that he thought his chief's actions quite defensible.

Secret Police Copy Minister's Private Correspondence

The interference of the police and the constant activity of the State in respect to church matters is well shown in the case of a young minister who, when arrested, was shown a volume in which had been copied all of his letters and all of those received by him over a period of months. The secret police had been on the job because he was not willing to submit to the dictates of Mueller.

"Love" for Jews Involves Little Justice

The shallowness of the German Christian claim that while they will not allow Jews in any important posts they still "love" them, was demonstrated to me when I conferred with a prominent German university theological professor who enlarged on this theme with eloquence. The next day, quite by chance, I met a young Jew who had worked for him for years and who had been dropped instantly when the Nazi agitation against Jews began. The fact that he was a Christian theological graduate, had been born a Christian, and was a noted author did not help him in the least! And the professor who dropped him at a time when he could not possibly get another post did not even express regret over his action.

I found that the condition of the Jews was hard to estimate exactly. In some ways they are in much less danger than they were a year ago. Physical attacks are rare, although no protection or court redress can be expected by a Jew who is subject to attack from Nazi enemies—as all Jews are. Evidence of various kinds came to my attention in this connection. The casual observer this year got the impression that the lot of the Jew had improved. The person living in Germany in contact with Jews of various classes will usually tell you that the "cold pogrom" goes remorselessly on—and its fiendish effects are spreading into other lands where Germans take it upon themselves to foment ill will against the Jew.

No Basic Change in Anti-Semitism

Not one basic change has taken place in Germany with respect to the aforementioned "cold pogrom." Under the leadership of the present Reich Bishop, Ludwig Mueller, the Protestant Church in Germany condones and morally supports this anti-Semitism. He has called anti-Semitism a "Christian campaign" and asserts that "Hitler's fight is a fight for Christendom against Jews, the most savage enemies of Chris-

tianity. The German people, united today, may go through bitterness and distress but will win this campaign for Christianity even if the Jews get together and determine to destroy the nation." Drawing a parallel between Christ and Chancellor Hitler, the Reich Bishop not only compared the recent appeal of Hitler for the support of the nation to the appeal of Christ for confidence in His Gospel, but also said, "The election result was the beginning of the whole nation's Christianity since it had the courage to vote for and stand behind the Leader in his fight against Jews." In keeping with this noble purpose the Reich Church apparently chose the time of the meeting of the Universal Christian Council in Denmark to bring into force an earlier decree which had temporarily been suspended, by which ministers and church officers with any non-Aryan ancestry or with non-Aryan wives are driven from their positions.

Unforgettable hours were spent this summer in conversation with Jews about themselves, their children, and their kinsfolk. Everywhere I received evidences of the cruel, unjust, unreasonable, and heathen attitudes of certain Nazi leaders. Indeed, the fact that they are more to blame even now than the common people was revealed in the German press. While I was in Berlin the papers carried an announcement from the Nazi officials that Germans were reported to be treating Jews too well—trading with them, talking to them, treating them, in other words, like human beings and fellow-citizens. This was sternly rebuked and the erring Germans were reminded that the party was unflinchingly set on its program against the non-Aryan. The simple kindness and good will of the average German had been asserting itself and must be checked by propaganda of hate!

Personal testimony from individual Jewish professional men, and even from non-Aryan Christians, indicates that every door is closed to non-Aryans or their defenders, save those of penury, migration, or suicide. Non-Aryan youth, while theoretically given proportionally determined opportunity in institutions of higher learning, are actually blocked effectively from ever gaining a place commensurate with their abilities or training.

Jewish youth organizations have been forbidden to wear uniforms, undertake marches, parades, or field sports, carry flares or banners, occupy joint living places or issue any publications. Physical exercises, walks, excursions, and hiking are still permitted, provided they are "kept within small circles and avoid any demonstrative character." Violation of these orders are punished with "protective custody."

New Check-up on Race Purity

A new regulation by which Germans will be compelled to carry racial identification cards—announced officially by Dr. Frick to a great gathering of officials within recent days — means by inference a kind of discrimination against the non-Aryan which is virtually tanta-

mount to the denial of food-cards to priests and others in Soviet Russia. (Latest news from Russia indicates that at the same time that Germany tightens her discrimination against minorities Russia has commenced a policy of liberalization.)

The Contagion Spreads

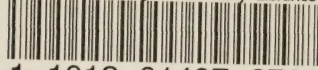
Since returning to America I discover growing concern over the apparent intention of the Nazi party to teach anti-Semitism in our own and other countries through groups such as the so-called "Friends of the New Germany." The injection by such groups of un-American, un-intelligent, and studiously inflammatory ideas into the contemporary political arena is calculated to bring serious consequences. Certain particularly unfortunate results from the point of view of public opinion will bear upon the Germans in America, as well as upon the relations of the German nation to the United States.

Spies and Youth

The prevalence of spies and spying I have alluded to already. I was never allowed to forget it when I was with Germans out of sympathy with Nazi policy. At Fanoë the young people's conference was disturbed by the fact that Nazi spies were evidently present—constantly reporting back to Germany what they saw and heard. So much anxiety was felt by the German youth delegates that when they came to return to Germany they were very glad to avail themselves of the opportunity of travelling with a prominent Englishman whose presence with them would afford a certain protection. Spies were present at the Baptist World Congress, of course. One does not like to think of what may happen to some of the German Baptists as a result of their having been observed—and their words recorded—at that meeting where so much was said against the basic theories of Nazism.

Root Out Obstinate Professors!

The dismantling of the best theological faculties seems to be definitely contemplated now. It will be recalled that many of the theological professors have protested vigorously against some of the policies of the State, particularly with respect to the treatment of the Jews and the introduction of racial discrimination into the Church. The leaders of these movements of protest are now being relieved of their teaching posts. This is not done directly by the Church, since the universities are not under church control. But many observers who ought to know think that the initiative is taken by the Reich Bishop's office. Von Soden, Hemmelinck, and Heiler were dismissed, and scores of others are slated to go because they have not made their teaching comport with the "*Weltanschauung*" of the Nazis. One of the best known professors of theology in Germany sat with me at lunch a few weeks



1 1012 01407 2799

ago and said with a sob in his voice that he did not know when the axe would fall, although he expected it daily because of the protests he had made against the Hitler policies. We have lodged strong representations with the German government in this connection, pointing out that if the great theologians are removed from the university faculties it will mean cutting off one of the best means of contact between the mind of Germany and the rest of the world. It is well known that the thousands of students from America and other countries who have gone to study in the German universities have been attracted by these great teachers. They will not go to hear the puppets of Rosenberg and Hitler talk arrant nonsense in so-called scientific and historical lectures which are thinly camouflaged Nazi propaganda.

Speaking of history reminds me of the methods now in vogue for falsifying it. An excellent example comes out in connection with the large-scale model of the first great Nazi Congress held in Nuremberg in the summer of 1933. At that time it will be recalled that the man who stood next to Hitler in the reviewing stand was his friend and associate Roehm. The model, which is to go into a museum to tell the story graphically for all future generations of Nazi children during the thousand years (sic) of the Hitler era, has no figure of Roehm! I did not see this with my own eyes, but I was told by a person whose testimony I regard as trustworthy. If enough is said about it, the Nazis will probably put the figure of Roehm back and then announce that those who said it was missing were guilty of spreading atrocity stories! This is the usual method of admitting mistakes in the rare instances where there is any change made as a result of criticism.

Barth to me at
Obermeyer - It's
a theol. problem -
not a moral!

Barth is right
no gospel - but
one on Christ can
help

Wanted us large
reports & the
only a part

2 X Nature of Gospel

only answer & under
rel -

Issued by

AMERICAN SECTION: UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR
LIFE AND WORK

287 Fourth Avenue, New York City

Does not claim to have
up



